



Australian Bureau of Statistics

2049.0 - Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2011

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105,000 people homeless on Census night 2011

The rate of homelessness in Australia was 49 persons for every 10,000 persons enumerated in the 2011 Census, up 8% from 45 persons in 2006, according to estimates of the prevalence of homelessness released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Today's release found that there were 105,237 people who were homeless on 9 August 2011, or 0.5% of the Australian population. Although the homeless rate rose by 8% in the five years to 2011, the number of people who were homeless rose 17% in those five years which also reflects the increase in the population over that time.

Most of the increase in homelessness between 2006 and 2011 resulted from the rise in the number of people living in severely crowded dwellings, up from 31,531 in 2006 to 41,390 in 2011. And about three quarters of the increase in the overall homelessness estimate to 2011 was accounted for by people who were born overseas.

On Census night 2011 the rate of homelessness was highest in the Northern Territory (731 per 10,000 persons) and lowest in Tasmania (32 per 10,000 persons).

Most homeless people were not sleeping rough or in improvised dwellings (only 6% of all homeless persons in 2011). The largest homeless group were people living in severely crowded dwellings accounting for 39% of the homeless. The next largest group was people staying in supported accommodation for the homeless (20% of the homeless in 2011), with 21,258 people in this group in 2011, up 23% on the number in 2006.

At the time of the 2011 Census 60% of homeless people were aged under 35 years, compared to 46% for the general population.

Today's publication also presents estimates of people who were not homeless but who were living in some form of marginal housing on Census night. These include people who may be at risk of homelessness. On Census night in 2011, there were 60,875 people (28 people per 10,000 persons) living in crowded dwellings just below the severe crowding threshold of homelessness. There were another 4,504 people (2 people per 10,000 persons) living in improvised dwellings in a range of circumstances that do not meet the definition of homelessness, and 12,963 people (6 people per 10,000 persons) who were marginally housed in caravan parks.

For more information see today's publication Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2011 (cat. no. 2049.0).

Media note: When reporting ABS data you must attribute the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or the ABS) as the source.

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